

Partial rugae as an aid in identification

Fingerprints and dental means represent the most scientifically reliable methods of identification. In general, the greater the degree of tissue destruction, the greater the importance of dental characteristics in affecting proper identification. Palatal rugae is considered one of the fixed anatomical landmarks of the upper jaw. Marks such as imprints of palatal rugae on dentures can be of use in identification if previous records exist. 150 casts were done for patients randomly selected from the Prosthetic Department, Faculty of Dentistry, Alexandria University. Their ages ranged from 25 to 50 years. A primary upper alginate impression was made for every patient. The impressions were casted in dental stones. All casts were photographed, studied and described. A classification system was developed on the basis of the morphologic features of the palatal rugae. Three distinct types were noticed; namely, parallel lines (50.66%), arborizations (24.67%) and irregular pattern (24.67%). The study showed that the palatal rugae pattern is sufficiently characteristic to discriminate between individuals.